

what lines this settlement will proceed. We do not know what terms of settlement will be arrived at, but I think we may take for granted that the settlement, when finally reached, will be in accord with the liberal principle of provincial rights. I think we may take for granted that it will be in harmony with progressive modern thought, and will in no way violate the principle of self-government. It must have been a matter of regret to all parties that this question was ever introduced into Dominion politics, and it is a matter of greater regret that it should have been introduced for the express purpose of furthering party ends, for I take it there can now be very little doubt that the late Government did introduce this question into Dominion politics as the very last hope of their retaining power. They knew, as well as the people throughout the country knew, that they had forfeited the support and respect and confidence of the country; they knew that the corruption and iniquities which marked their administration had alienated from them the confidence of the people; they knew there was a general dissatisfaction throughout the country consequent upon the failure of the National Policy. They knew those things, and as a last hope they sought to stir up religious and racial strife, thinking that by this means their iniquities and shortcomings would be lost sight of and that they would secure the support of one of the contending elements. Sir, they did not hesitate to set creed against creed, race against race, province against province. They did not hesitate to create a fermentation which practically led the people of this country to the verge of civil war.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Mr. McINNES. Hon. gentlemen smile, but I think I am within the mark in making that statement. They brought the different elements into a position of the greatest antagonism—it would be impossible to imagine greater antagonism without open violence—and they did this, altogether for party ends; and these are the men who for years have been deluging this country with political clap-trap about patriotism and loyalty and the unity of Canada. Sir, they would not hesitate to disrupt this whole confederation if they could thereby gratify their inordinate greed for power. If you have any doubts about that, consider the situation to-day. The fight has been fought, the principle of coercion has been contended for. It was contended for by one hon. gentleman who was prepared, you will remember, to lay down his life for it. But now that the fight has been fought, what do we find? Where is the principle of coercion to-day which these hon. gentlemen were contending for? They have discarded it, they have thrust it to the winds, and I am constrained to ask whether the hon. leader of the Opposition has thought better of his life, since the new Government came into power,

or whether he has thought less of that principle. But worse than that, to show what opportunists, what mere opportunists, we have to contend against, you need but go to North Grey to-day. What is the cry there? Sir, after the late Government had used every effort to gain the support of the province of Quebec, after it had done everything and was prepared to do everything to flatter their religious or racial instincts, after having failed in their efforts to compel the people of that province, by the most ungodly use of godly influences, to support them, what do we find? We find that rather with the hearts of a foiled seducer than with the spirit of a great party, they now turn upon that province and malign the character and nobleness of that province which they could neither win nor conquer. We find that up in North Grey to-day they are howling about French domination, forgetting altogether that they were the party who tried hardest to secure that French support in this House. Having failed to do this, they now raise the cry that this country is being subjected to French domination.

Sir, they have failed to hit the mark altogether. They have lost their power, and a sort of insanity appears to have seized them similar to that which possesses a she-bear who has lost her cubs. But even that does not explain their condition, for although we cannot expect them to see things in a normal way, yet in casting around for the reason for their loss of power, they ought to be able to see that the reason they are not on this side of the House is not because the French Canadian people of Quebec have turned against them, but because they have forfeited the confidence and respect of the young element of the electors of this country. It was not the French in Quebec nor the Orange nor the Protestant or English vote in Ontario or anywhere else that returned this Government to power. It was the young element in Quebec and Ontario and throughout the whole country. Have you ever, Sir, considered the fact that of those who cast the first vote on the 23rd of June last, thousands of them had attained the age of 29 before they could exercise their franchise? As you know, five years elapsed between the last general election and the election before that. The election before that was made on lists which were three years old, which meant that the man who had attained his majority in 1888, the day after the lists were made up, had no right to exercise his franchise until the 23rd of June last. Thus tens of thousands of young electors, between the ages of 22 and 29, cast their first vote on the 23rd of June last. That is the element which placed in power this new Government. I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that 80 per cent of the young electorate of this country are believers in the principles of Liberalism, and have been attracted to the Liberal party, by the justice of its cause,